

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 453

At the request of Mr. BAYH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 453, a bill to prohibit deceptive practices in Federal elections.

S. 960

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 960, a bill to establish the United States Public Service Academy.

S. 2173

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2173, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to improve standards for physical education.

S. 3364

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3364, a bill to increase the recruitment and retention of school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists by low-income local educational agencies.

S. 3517

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3517, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Public Health Service Act to provide parity under group health plans and group health insurance coverage for the provision of benefits for prosthetic devices and components and benefits for other medical and surgical services.

S. 3683

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3683, a bill to amend the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act to require approval by the Congress for certain expenditures for the Troubled Asset Relief Program.

S. 3697

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3697, a bill to amend the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act to require approval by the Congress for certain expenditures for the Troubled Asset Relief Program.

S. 3708

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3708, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to health professions education, and for other purposes.

S. 3728

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3728, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to waive non-Federal share requirements for certain transportation programs and activities through September 30, 2009.

S. RES. 710

At the request of Mr. REED, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 710, a resolution designating the week of February 2 through February 6, 2009, as "National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week".

S. RES. 728

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 728, a resolution designating January 2009 as "National Mentoring Month".

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

Mr. CASEY:

S. 3732. A bill to assist in creating substantive culture change in long-term residential care by establishing a small house nursing home loan program to provide for the establishment, renovation, and construction of small house nursing homes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Promoting Small House Nursing Homes Act. This is a bill I expect will play a significant role in the way we care for our older citizens in this country. I also hope and expect this bill to make an important contribution to the framing and substance of the landmark health care reform we anticipate in the coming year. Moreover, because our current economic problems are interwoven with out-of-control health care costs, this bill will contribute to a revitalization of our economy and the creation of new jobs. Finally, it will establish solid criteria for long term residential care that will not only improve the quality of life of older citizens, but save money through cost-effective, comprehensive and coordinated long term and health care.

This bill provides a dramatically different approach to long term residential care for older citizens than is offered by the traditional nursing home model.

The Promoting Small House Nursing Home Act incorporates the principles of person-centered care as a cornerstone of all aspects of long term residential care. What do we mean by person-centered care? The philosophy is simple: Our older citizens deserve to live lives of dignity and respect through all stages of life. About 10 years ago, the Philadelphia Inquirer reported, "Life can have quality and meaning even until the very last breath." Our older citizens have a profound right to be decision-makers in their own care—to be at the center of their own care, with a partnership of family and providers. Our older citizens are critically important to the overall health and well-being of our society. I quote a well known expert in person-centered care, Dr. Bill Thomas, who says, "People of all ages will live better lives when we succeed in bringing

elders back to the heart of our society."

My bill translates this profound philosophy into a specific policy prescription by doing the following: creating a low-interest loan fund for building new or renovating existing long term care facilities that follow articulated small house nursing home model guidelines; establishing clear and specific program requirements and guidelines that build upon existing programs that have successfully implemented substantial culture change and person-centered care; creating a home-like and non-institutional model of care for long term care residential facilities that is based upon the principles of: collaborative decision-making; respect; and significantly improved quality of life for residents and staff alike.

We currently have an estimated 38 million Americans over the age of 65, and that number is expected to double within the next 20 years. In the midst of this, health care costs are rising exponentially, the quality of outcomes is not consistent, and older citizens are often abandoned to navigate a confusing and complex health care system. Older citizens also report extremely low levels of satisfaction with life in nursing homes. This \$122 billion industry includes 16,000 nursing homes and significant concerns persist about maltreatment and neglect of our older citizens in 20 percent of these homes. As I know from my work in State government, most nursing homes provide quality care but that 20 percent is what we hear most about. However, a recent survey by the AARP found that fewer than 1 percent of individuals over 50 with a disability want to move to a nursing home. There has to be a better way, and in fact there is.

Person-centered care provides that better way. It is a straightforward concept and yet it has taken years of hard work to get concrete initiatives underway. We have a long way to go and much to learn. But in order to succeed, we must pass legislation like the bill I have introduced today.

Traditional nursing facilities require residents' lives to revolve around institutional schedules for waking, bathing and dressing. Traditional facilities far too often identify residents by their health conditions, vulnerabilities and room numbers rather than their unique strengths and gifts. Staff members are attracted to the field of direct care service because they want to help older citizens but they are just as ill-served by this institutionalized culture as are the residents. Workers are minimally trained, over-worked and carry patient loads that make it impossible to engage in any personal time with residents—in fact, such relationships are often discouraged. They have little or no say in decision-making, relegated—like the residents—to the fringes of a system that places the needs of the institution over those of the human beings in it.